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OPEN SCHOLARSHIP POLICY OBSERVATORY



G7 Expert Group on Open Science

by Caroline Winter | 1 December 2017 | English, Observations, Observations and Responses | 0 comments



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This observation has been written by Sarah Milligan.

At a glance

Title	Annex 4: G7 Expert Group on Open Science
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At a [meeting](#) in Tsukuba, Japan in May 2016, the G7^[1] Science Ministers established a G7 Open Science Working Group out of recognition of the

“growing need to share common international principles for open science and to put these principles into practice through open access to scholarly publications and open data.” (n.p.).

This group had the aims of “sharing open science policies, exploring supportive incentive structures, and identifying good practices for promoting increasing access to the results of publicly funded research, including scientific data and publications” (n.p.). The Science Ministers also supported the promotion of international coordination and collaboration to develop appropriate infrastructure to support open science, open access and open data.

When the **G7 Open Science Working Group** met in Turin, Italy in September 2017, they recognized the importance of an international approach to “help the speed and coherence of the transition towards Open Science” (n.p.). They recommended a joint approach with each G7 nation convening with relevant stakeholders, while simultaneously feeding back perspectives and progress to the other G7 nations in order to find “common areas of action to support more effective implementation of Open Science practices” (n.p.). In particular, the OS Working Group focused its efforts on two particular aspects of Open Science: incentives and infrastructures.

For the first, the OS Working Group identified its ambition to

“foster a research environment in which career advancement takes into account Open Science activities, through incentives and rewards for researchers, and valuing the skills and capabilities of the Open Science workforce” (n.p.).

The OS Working Group recommended that each nation examine its research evaluation and reward systems with a view towards considering Open Science activities. For instance, Open Science activities could be recognized and rewarded at the funding level and during career reviews; activities that have been traditionally undervalued, such as data curation and management, could be recognized; and metrics could be created for Open Science practices.

The OS Working Group’s second ambition is that

“all researchers are able to deposit, access and analyze scientific data across disciplines and on international scales. Research data management adheres to the FAIR principles whereby data is findable, accessible, interoperable, and reusable” (n.p.).

Recommendations at the national level include working towards the use of data management plans with new research projects, developing common interfaces and standards, and supporting approaches that maximize long-term accessibility and preservation.

The G7 Science Ministers **endorsed** the OS Working Group’s recommendations and encouraged the OS Working Group to report upon actions taken by the G7 members at the next Science Ministers’ Meeting.

The OS Working Group recommendations generally align with Canadian and international recommendations around open science and data management. The “**Tri-Agency Statement of Principles on Digital Data Management**,” for instance, outlines expectations of best practices in research data management and preservation. Likewise, the European-focused **RECODE Project** recommends developing policies that reward researchers who create open data, as well as developing infrastructures that support open access to data.

Following the meeting, the Canadian Association of Research Libraries (CARL) released a “**Statement in**

Support of G7 Science Ministers’ Stated Priorities Around Open Science.” CARL notes the areas of action highlighted by the OS Working Group align with the priorities of CARL’s own Scholarly Communication Roadmap. There is, according to CARL,

“room to build on the success of the Tri-Agency Open Access Policy for Publications, to develop new initiatives and incentives to ensure a large-scale move towards open science, and to foster culture change and build supportive infrastructure for the efficient and effective management of open science research” (n.p.).

This type of international focus on Open Science is not new. In its 1999 “[Declaration on Science and the Use of Scientific Knowledge](#),” UNESCO repeatedly reiterated the importance of sharing scientific knowledge. In 2015, the [Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development](#) published a report entitled “[Making Open Science a Reality](#).” Although the G7/8 Science Ministers have only met five times to date, open scientific research data has been a topic since their [second meeting](#) in 2013, when they supported the principle that “to the greatest extent and with the fewest constraints possible publicly funded scientific research data should be open” (n.p.). However, the concrete recommendations provided by the OS Working Group represent a crucial shift towards action.

[1] The G7 consists of Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom and the United States. The European Union is also represented.

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